1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
Look! Look!
I made this in art class!
If you open up one at a time, Christmas comes!
Ooh...
An advent calendar, huh?
One a day! You only open one a day!
Nope!
What's next? What's in the next one?!
HA HA HA
Ooh! There's candy inside!
ROLL
Okay, let's open today's...
Don't touch it, okay?
Hmph! I'm putting it up here!
Ha ha...
It's already that time of the year, huh?
What kind of Christmas will we have this year?

Chapter 31: Christmas Cake and Friends

...we should have a graduation Christmas party!
This year...
I know! It doesn't feel like the last one at all.
Ha ha ha...
We keep saying it's the last one, but there are so many events...
It's our last year here.
Yeah. We can borrow the big room at the day care.
Huh?
Daddy, I'm going to Yuka's place today!
We'll borrow her for a little while, if you don't mind.
On the afternoon of the 24th, right?
Hello!

Daddy put it up the other day.
Look at the big tree!
WOWIE!
AWESOME!
SIIIIGH...
Isn't it great?
It's bigger than the one at Mikio's house and the one at Hana's house and the one at Suguru's house!
You want some cookies, Tsumugi?
Yeah! I want cookies!
Let's play with dollies!
Yeah!
"Interesting"...?
Uh...?
...is really interesting!
Yuka-chan, your house...

Huh?
Mommy's really good, so she's gonna make a cake for the Christmas party.
Mommy made them.
They're yummy!
Oh...
...so I bet your dad will go buy a really yummy one.
Your family's also supposed to bring a cake...
Each family's bringing one dish to the Christmas party.
You can either buy it or make it yourself.
FLIP FLIP FLIP
I bet Daddy...
...can *make* a yummy cake, too!

Tsumugi, that's...
If I told him to make this one, I think he could!
This one!
It's shaped like a log!
Look! Look! It's a wonderful cake!

GLANCE
GLANCE
It looks like stairs!
I bet you could make...
M-
Mommy

Hello!
I've come to pick her up!
DING-DONG!
Um...

すどーん
SLAM
DAAA-
-AAADDY!
Let's make this for the Christmas party!
A yule log cake. It's a chocolate Christmas cake.
Huh?!
This! We're gonna make this! I wanna make this!
Huh? Huh?
What is this?
I was going to buy one...

Then...
We'll try our best.
Yay!
We'll try our best...
But if it fails, we'll buy one.
We'll have to.

M-my mommy makes yummy cakes...
So maybe Mommy...
...can make your cake too.

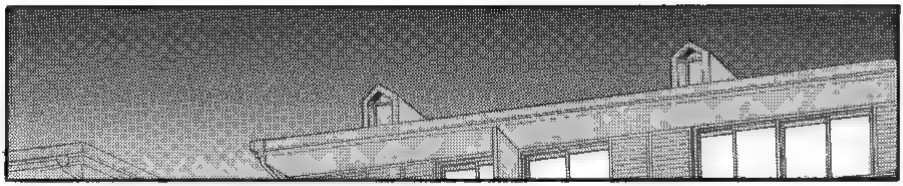
Yuka...
Sigh

Mommy's making a normal-size cake.
And it's a small kitchen so I can't make a lot of cakes at once.

Ask mommy first, okay?
SNIFFLE
Eep!
Are you going to cry?
I-I'm not gonna cry...
I'm okay...
Do you understand what mommy's saying?
Okay. If you understand, then good.
BA-DUM
BA-DUM

あ…
Oh…
MOMMY DOESN'T GET MAD.
She tends to cry whenever you say something that goes against what she's thinking.
That girl...
She can be a little sensitive.
I want her to be a little stronger.
I need to be a little more strict when I have to.
But there's going to be a lot of new kids at the elementary school next year.
I think it's hard to talk to my kid sometimes, too.
Ooh...
So it's the same for you too...
It didn't really seem very strict to me.
Not at all.
Sorry if I surprised you.
I try, but neither Yuka nor I am used to it...

I hope Yuka learns to start thinking beyond that soon.
...
At this point ...
..she gets startled and sad, and that's it.
I...
...get scold-ed all the time lately.
Let's put one more stuffed animal away.
... Yuka?
She used to be so nice.

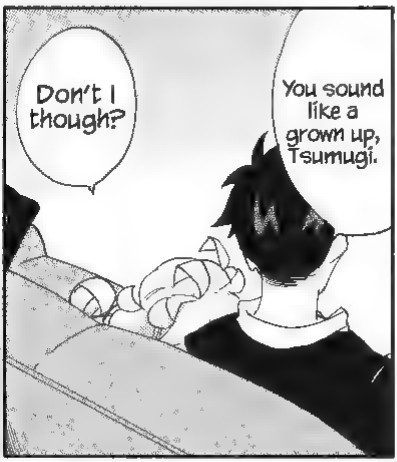


?

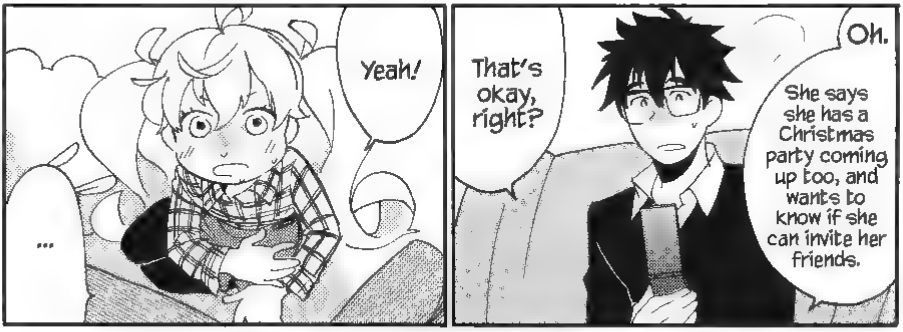
Daddy, you send Kotori a text?
Just sent it.
Did you say let's make a cake?
I did.

I guess...
...even the kids I'm jealous of have their own problems, too...

...Well, I'm sure both she and her mom...
Oh! It's a message!
TWEEDLE LEE!


You sound like a grown up, Tsumugi.
Don't I though?

I can read it!
It says okay!
Well, great!
I'm glad, but let's finish talking!
TICKLE
TICKLE
TICKLE
KYAH HA HA
HA HA!

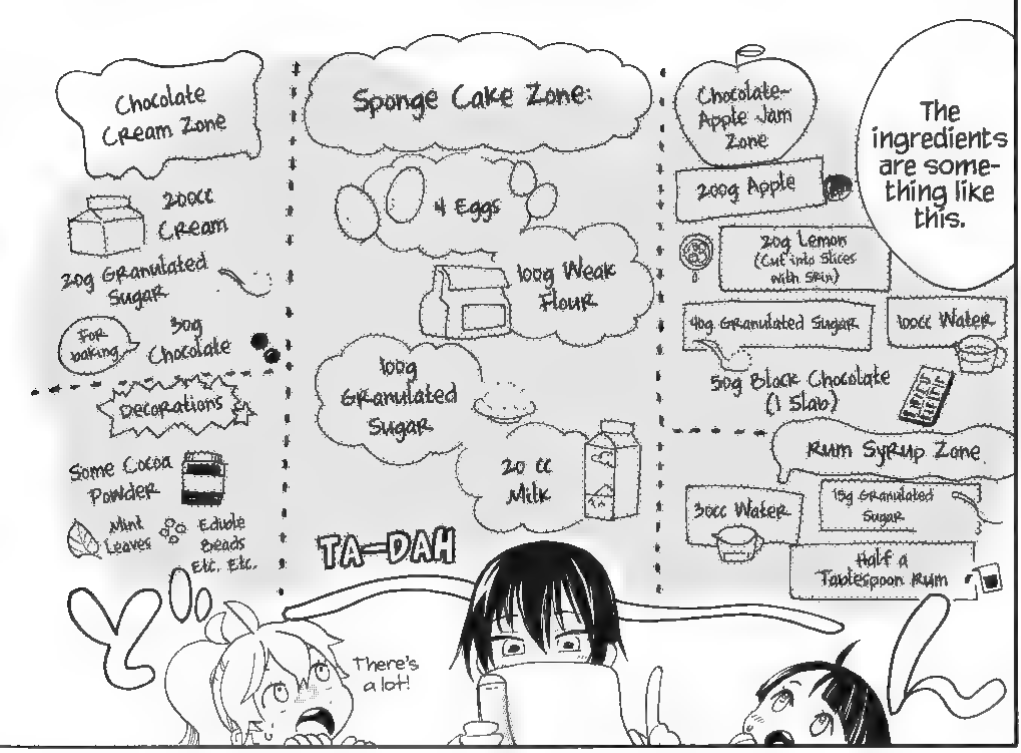

Oh.
She says she has a Christmas party coming up too, and wants to know if she can invite her friends.
That's okay, right?
Yeah!
...

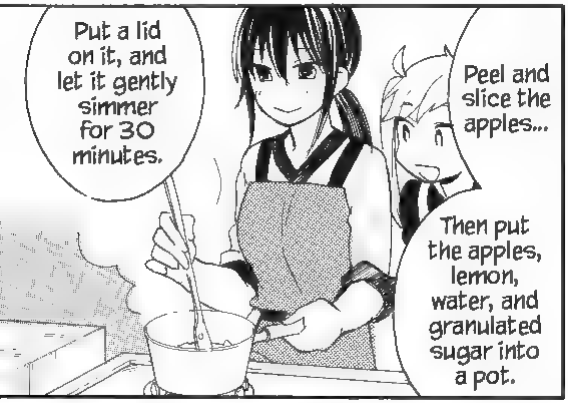
Um...
Can I invite a friend too...?
We're all gonna make a cake. ♡
And so...

Hmm ...
It's a cake class, mommy!
Let's all make a cake!
Chiyo and Ida-san's friends are going to come too.
Do you guys want to come, too?
Awww .....
I appreciate the offer, but I think I'd rather use the oven I'm used to...
...Sorry.
Oh!
Of course, don't worry about it.

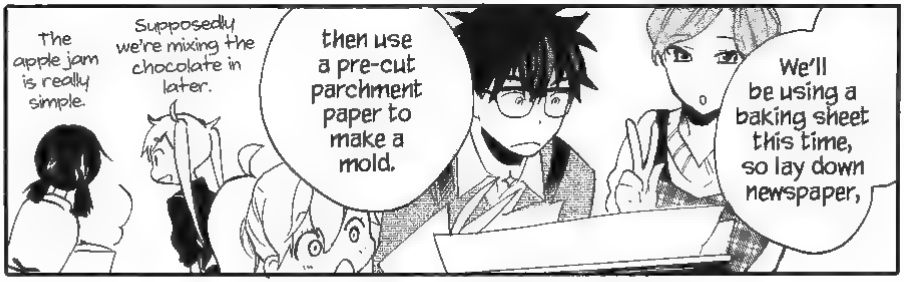
I'd really like to know how you feel about this.
...I don't know...
Huh?
Yuka...
What do you want to do?
Tsu...
Tsumugi's trying to be considerate...
Um, when you work together, it's fun and you go "wow" and everybody feels great!
...
Do you think you could take just Yuka?
I'm sorry, but...
Oh!
Of course, no problem.
I...
I wanna go...

...
Yeah.
I'm glad you told me how you felt.
Let's show each other what we make okay?
Yeah..
16
18
23
Thanks for coming!
Hi there!
Thank you for having me...
BOW
Th-


Chocolate Cream Zone
200cc Cream
20g Granulated Sugar
For baking
30g Chocolate
Decorations
Some Cocoa Powder
Mint Leaves
Edible Beads
Etc. Etc.
Sponge Cake Zone:
4 Eggs
100g Weak Flour
100g Granulated Sugar
20 cc Milk
Chocolate-Apple Jam Zone
200g Apple
20g Lemon (Cut into Slices with Skin)
40g Granulated Sugar
100cc Water
50g Black Chocolate (1 Slab)
Rum Syrup Zone
30cc Water
15g Granulated Sugar
Half a Tablespoon Rum
The ingredients are something like this.
TA-DAH
There's a lot!


Peel and slice the apples...
Then put the apples, lemon, water, and granulated sugar into a pot.
Put a lid on it, and let it gently simmer for 30 minutes.

A jam made from chocolate and apples?
It works pretty well.
I thought it would be more interesting than just all chocolate cream.


The apple jam is really simple.
Supposedly we're mixing the chocolate in later.
then use a pre-cut parchment paper to make a mold.
We'll be using a baking sheet this time, so lay down newspaper,

Let's do it!
Sure you can!
Huh? Can I do it right...?
Yeah!
Okay, ready to crack some eggs?
While the oven's heating...
...we crack the eggs into a bowl and beat them.
Softly...
...to crack the shell
Tap very softly and gently...
We did it right!
We did it!
POP

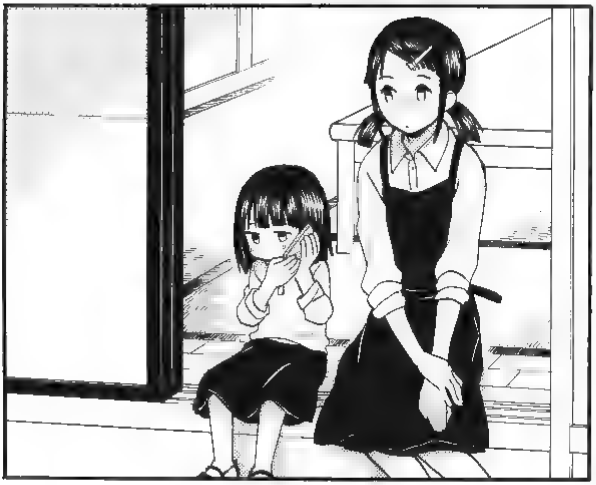
Let's break more eggs!
Yeah!
There's no shell mixed in.
You did great!
Oh!
Yeah! Of course, let's tell her!
Please tell Mommy that I was able to break an egg, too.
This is kind of fun.
Hee hee!
The older girls are doing fine too.
It says, "Warm until it gets to skin tempera-ture."
That's right.
Like this?
Once you've added the granulated sugar, put it on a double boiler and stir.
Here's some hot water!

I...
I wanna call Mommy...
HUH?

What's wrong, Yuko?
SQUEEZE
ぎゅ

Okay ...
Oh, you guys keep going.
Come with me.

I dunno... but I wanna call her.
You miss her?



She said she'd never really been apart from her mom...
...so maybe she's nervous?
...
She seems fine.
Um_
I cracked an egg!

She said she gets mad...
But I can tell she's really nice.
...is really nice to her, isn't she?
Yuka's mommy...

But that's something...
...Yuka and her mom have to talk about.
...Yeah.

When our friends are having problems...
...let's do our best to try and help them, okay?
All we can do...
...is help out as best we can.

Yeah!
...

They're about to use the machine to mix it!
Come over here, Yuka!
I told her I cracked the egg and she said I was amazing.
BLUSH
Every-thing okay?
Yup.

カチ☆
CLICK
Okay, I've used a hand mixer before.
ほぉ…
OOH!
ばがが
BAGAGAGAGAGAGAGA
がが
When you use a mixer, you rotate the bowl and keep the mixer away from the sides!
Aw, jeez ...
I-It's...
It's okay! It's okay!
AUGH!
I'M SO SORRY!

You're right!
It says that in the instructions!
I see! Wow, you're really smart!
You're amazing!
GOOD WORK!
Um.

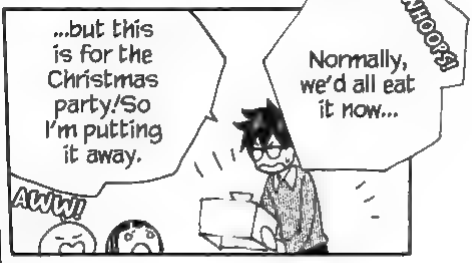
Not me...
It's Mommy who's amazing...
Mommy always does it that way...
Mo—

You're amazing for remembering it!

And Daddy forgot too!
AH HA HA!
Aw, come on...
I didn't remember that!
PEPT!
Done baking!
Okay, let's try it again!
Here's the chocolate cream.
Let's draw lines to make it look like a tree!
Spread the chocolate-apple jam...
...and roll it up.

We did it!

HUH?
Here, we cut the end off to taste it.
Now now, Sensei.
It's our reward for working so hard.


WHOOPS!
Normally, we'd all eat it now...
...but this is for the Christmas party! So I'm putting it away.
AWW!

ぱて
CHOMP
Let's eat!
It's important to taste-test!
If you say so...
YAY!
It's...
...delicious!

Here you go!
Good luck!
I'm positive...
...everyone is gonna love this.
YAY!
YAY!

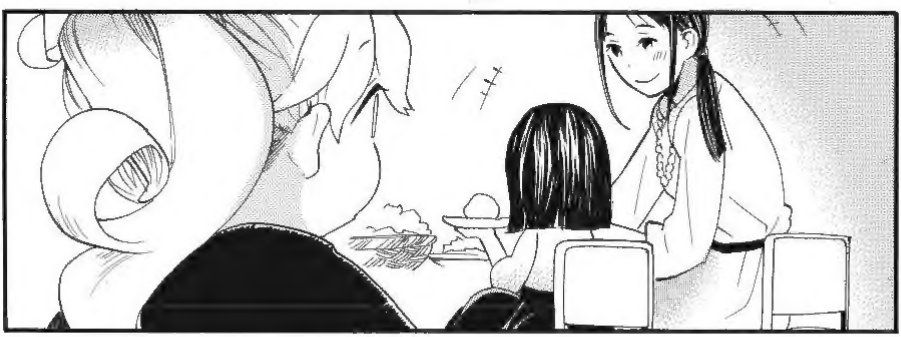
Off we go!

YAMMER
YAMMER
Everyone's dressed up!
MURMUR
MURMUR

It's a log!
Hee hee hee!
It's a tree!
Cool!
You and Yuka made this?
Lemme see your cake!
Yeah! It was fun!
Mom-my!
You did great, Yuka.
My cake is...

Mommy ...
WOW!
It's three-stories high!
This one's amazing, too!
...that you were angry.
I thought ...
I was going to make my regular one...
Split it into parts, fill in the gap with chocolate or something, and then use cream to hide it!
...but I forced it into a triple-decker cake.
I was sad because I wanted you to listen to me.
Mommy loves you.
I wasn't angry.
But...
I cracked the egg!
When I heard your voice on the phone...
...I knew you were trying your best.

And then...
I wanted to try my best too!
Mommy!
Come try my cake!
I can't wait!
Okay, let's get started



To be continued...